

## Previewing

**We preview longer texts like novels, readers, non-fiction books, and textbooks.**

### **HOW TO PREVIEW:**

1. Read the main title and think or write about everything you know about the subject.
2. Read the introduction, preface, foreword, or back flap to get an idea of the general focus or theme of the text.
3. Read bibliographic information about the author and predict the purpose the author has in writing the text and the position the author is taking on the subject. How does the author's point of view influence the text? Do you identify with the author in any way?
4. Check to see how long the text is, how many chapters it has, and how long the chapters are.
5. Read the Table of Contents and see how the subject is broken down into different categories. Predict how the author will present or build their argument. Put a star by any chapters, articles, or sections that pique your interest.
6. Look at a chapter to see how it is organized. Is there an introduction, summary, comprehension questions?
7. If there is one author, read a few short passages anywhere in the text to get a feel for the writer's style. If it seems difficult for you be sure to plan enough time for reading.
8. Note any pictures, charts, graphs, tables, maps, timelines, character summaries, family trees, or other visual aids to build a sense of what or who is important in the text.
9. Note any typographical aids: words in italics or boldface, pre-defined vocabulary. Why are these words important?
10. Ask yourself questions: what do you expect to learn? What type of information is being presented?

### **REASONS TO PREVIEW:**

1. To become familiar with the content and organization of a selection; to activate any prior knowledge you have about the subject.
2. To get started on a long or difficult text, which you otherwise may avoid.
3. To help you plan your reading time – using chapter or section completion as reading goals can be effective ways to complete reading assignments, previewing the author's writing style to see whether or not it is difficult for you will also help you set up a realistic reading schedule.
4. To establish a purpose for reading – why is the author writing, what is s/he trying to get across to you, and why are you reading it?
5. To identify more important and less important sections of the text, helping you to decide when to read closely and when to skim during your serious reading.
6. To help you remember the main points – finding them during previewing and then again during serious reading will help you remember them later.
7. To build interest in what you are reading.